



United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

Jeffrey A. Taylor
United States Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

USAO Public Affairs

(202) 514-6933

www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc

Former Auditor at D.C. Office of Tax and Revenue Sentenced to Jail for Receiving a Bribe

WASHINGTON - El-Hadj Drame, a former Tax Auditor with the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue ("OTR"), was sentenced today to four months in prison followed by four months of home detention for receiving a bribe, announced U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor, Joseph Persichini, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Charles J. Willoughby, Inspector General for the District of Columbia.

Drame, 36, of Silver Spring, Maryland, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Paul L. Friedman, after pleading guilty in November 2008. The Court also ordered that, following the defendant's release from prison, the defendant be placed on two years of supervised release, of which the four months of home detention is a part, and perform 100 hours of community service. In addition, the Court ordered Drame to pay a total of \$6,000 in restitution to the FBI.

According to the factual proffer agreed to by Drame at the time of his plea, Drame began his employment as a Tax Auditor at OTR in April 2005. His duties included conducting office and combined field audits of a wide range of different tax returns filed by individuals, partnerships, fiduciaries, unincorporated business, and corporations to determine correct tax liability.

In April 2007, Drame was assigned to conduct a tax audit on a particular business located in the District of Columbia. The audit specifically targeted the business's sales and use tax liability. In late October 2007, Drame met with the business's accountant and the business owner at the business's office to discuss the business's tax liability. At the meeting, Drame provided the business's accountant and the business owner with his initial calculation of the business's tax liability. The business's accountant told Drame that his proposed tax liability for the business was too high.

On November 2, 2007, Drame telephoned the business owner and told the business owner that he wanted to talk to him about the audit and how Drame could help the business owner. Drame and the business owner agreed to meet a couple of days later at a McDonald's

in Silver Spring, Maryland. At that meeting, on November 4, 2007, Drame told the business owner that he could reduce the business's tax liability, but, in exchange, the business owner would need to make a payment to Drame.

On November 8, 2007, Drame and the business owner again met at a McDonald's in Silver Spring, Maryland. Drame again explained that he would lower the business's tax liability in exchange for a payment by the business owner to Drame. Drame told the business owner that he wanted a payment of \$6,000. The business owner asked Drame if he could write him a check for the \$6,000. Drame responded that he wanted the \$6,000 in cash because he was concerned about a check being traced. When the business owner asked Drame what assurances he had that Drame would reduce the business's tax liability, Drame replied that he would not do anything to upset the business owner and cause him to tell others about their agreement. Drame told the business owner that he wanted no one else, including the business's accountant, to know about their agreement, because Drame was concerned about their deal being reported. Drame told the business owner that after Drame received the \$6,000 from the business owner, Drame would email confirmation of the tax liability reduction to the business's accountant.

On November 14, 2007, Drame met the business owner on the street outside the business's office in Washington, D.C. There, the business owner gave Drame \$6,000 in cash in a white envelope and asked Drame questions about what would happen next. Drame told the business owner that the next day he would email to the business's accountant documentation showing the reduced tax liability for the business.

On Thursday, November 15, 2007, Drame sent an email to the business's accountant which reflected the reduced tax liability for the business.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Taylor, FBI Assistant Director in Charge Persichini, and District of Columbia Inspector General Willoughby praised the hard work of FBI Special Agents and District of Columbia OIG Special Agent Lloyd Hodge. They also commended Legal Assistant April Peeler. Finally, they commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Ellen Chubin Epstein, who prosecuted this matter.

###